

532,053

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
29 April 2004 (29.04.2004)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2004/035784 A2

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: C12N 15/11

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/FT2003/000776

(22) International Filing Date: 17 October 2003 (17.10.2003)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
60/419,562 21 October 2002 (21.10.2002) US

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(81) Designated States (national): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT (utility model), AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ (utility model), CZ, DE (utility model), DE, DK (utility model), DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE (utility model), EE, ES, FI (utility model), FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK (utility model), SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (regional): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— without international search report and to be republished upon receipt of that report

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

WO 2004/035784 A2

(54) Title: SOLUBLE RNA POLYMERASE PROTEIN AND METHODS FOR THE USE THEREOF

(57) Abstract: A polymerase protein originating from a eukaryotic cell and involved in the RNA silencing pathway is for the first time provided in a purified soluble form that possesses a detectable RNA polymerization activity. This polymerase is useful in methods and kits for *in vitro* RNA synthesis. A polymerase of the invention copies ssRNA templates to produce two types of reaction products: short and long RNA copies. It can also copy ssDNA templates. The polymerization does not require a primer for the initiation of RNA synthesis, although RNA synthesis can be also initiated in the presence of a primer. In addition to standard nucleotides polymerase of this invention also accepts a number of modified nucleotides. The polymerase is useful in many downstream applications such as production of labeled RNA probes or generation of trigger RNA molecules to induce RNA interference effects in living cells or suitable *in vitro* systems.